

(This meeting will be held at Dirigo High School. The board meeting will also be available via zoom and livestream on the RSU 56 Facebook page.)

1. Minutes of the August 24, 2021 Board Meeting
Motion: B. Dyer Seconded: N. Sneller
L. Whittington wants it noted that B. Dyer did not make the motion to follow CDC guidelines. He made that motion. (In going back to listen to the board meeting B. Dyer is the one that made the motion.

L. Whittington would like the names of how board members voted on the Framework vote to be reflected in the minutes.

Minutes for August 24, 2021 to be revised

Passed

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rachel Brown: Question: Currently do we have a list of staff and students that are out in quarantine?

Answer: This will be addressed during the Old Business part of the meeting

Charlie Swan: He wanted to publicly give a Huge Thank you on behalf of his entire family to the RSU 56 school system and our surrounding communities. One of the ways our district excels is in showing support in time of need. Our district really showed that the past couple of weeks while they dealt with the passing of their mom. Mrs. Swan taught in the Peru school system for 26 years. She inspired himself and many of his siblings, nieces and nephews to go into education. Thank everyone in the school community for their incredible love and support. It was very much appreciated.

Brandy Bordeaux: Thank you for sharing the survey numbers. From that we can see that both school staff and the community are against masking. Most people have made up their minds on this. There are many topics that seem to be off limits. Lately COVID & masking are a couple of the topics, it's become one of those things you don't talk about. In August the school board made a decision to let parents decide what was best for their children's health. It is my hope that even with some positive cases and quarantining that the school board will not change their decision and let parents make the decision. If this is not the case I would suggest that you use Covid money to provide masks for all students and staff. Also again shortened the school day like was done last year knowing that long term masking is not in the best interest for our staff and students. She encouraged parents to call the Commissioner's office because the school board's hands are tied by the DOE. She gave the Commissioner's phone number.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from MDOE Nutrition Department after summer feeding review. Thanks to Gena and the nutrition staff as no findings or corrections were noted.
Excellent job with summer feeding

NEW BUSINESS

1. Election fo the RSU 56 School Board ~~President~~ **Chair**
Motion: A. Cushman made a motion to nominate Barbara Chow as Board Chair
Seconded: B. Ross
N. Sneller made a motion to close the nominations Seconded: B. Ross
Passed
Vote on motion to nominate B. Chow - 1 Opposed, 1 Abstain- Vote Passed
2. Election of RSU 56 Vice Chair
Motion: A. Cushman made a motion to nominate Bruce Ross as Vice Chair

Seconded: N. Sneller

N. Sneller made a motion to cease nominations

Seconded: A. Cushman

Passed

Vote on motion to nominate B. Ross- 1 Abstain- Vote Passed

3. Committee Assignments

Barbara went over the list of the current committee assignments

There is an opening in Personnel, Policy, Buildings & Grounds and Curriculum

Larry Whittington said he'd go on Curriculum

Angela Cushman said she's go on Personnel

Tim Kelly said he'd go on Policy

Only other opening is Buildings & Grounds

4. RSU 56 Evaluation System (Charlie Swan)

Presenting on behalf of the evaluation committee. Due to COVID the past year and a half the evaluation system was adjusted. The one area that was adjusted was on Student Growth. The weight/or value of that was shifted to Professional Practice. The Professional Practice was changed to be 70% and the Professional Growth 30%. These are mostly in reference to teachers. The evaluation committee would like us to stay on this hold/pause until the end of our first evaluation cycle or our next one which will be in the spring of 2023 or June of 2023. We want over the course of this year and next year do a full reassessment of our evaluation system. We've been using it for 5 years. It came out of both state mandates and work done in RSU 10. We want to look at our standards. We want to look at our different pieces we have in it. We want to look at our observation tool that we use which is called I-Observation. Would like to do a whole scale look at it. We would like to hear from the staff and administrators if this tool that we are using and the plan that we have set up is meeting our needs and getting what we need to create fair evaluations. Coming tonight to ask for an extension and a hold on our current system and to explain that the evaluation committee would like to spend the course of this year to relook at our plan and coming back to you either at the end of this year or the beginning of next year with what we would recommend going forward.

B. Chow had a question about if all staff had been evaluated. Charlie replied they had been. The board had previously voted to put 2 years together due to all the in/out of Covid.

5. Review of 25% of the additional ED279 funding (\$71,909.34) will be moved into the Capital Reserve Fund.

Pam explained that in reading the Warrant Article over again from the town votes, there was only one that the additional money can go to because of the warrant article specified that it would go to the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of maintenance of and minor remodeling. So this \$71,909.34 will be transitioned into the Capital Reserve Fund as voted on by the voters.

OLD BUSINESS

1. RSU 56 Return to Classroom Instruction Framework- review data and update if applicable

Pam went over the survey that was sent out and explained the numbers of each survey. The board decided at the last meeting that they wanted to evaluate the information and look at the framework at each meeting. This was put out for the community to have a voice. This was to gather information for the board to see. From the community survey there were 468 responses. About 60% of the community want to be unmasked or have it be parent choice. About 40% said They would like masking of some kind. 118 of the employees responded to the survey. Just the opposite, about 60% of the employees wanted to see masking of some sort. 40% wanted to continue with CDC guidance or parent choice. The same survey was done with the Collaborative Team. There were 14 responses, approximately 80% wanted masking of some sort, 20% wanted to remain with CDC guidance and parent choice.

Pam then shared the current data across the district. Positive and Quarantine Data to Date:

DES: 12 Positive students; 110 Students in CC quarantine; 5 Positive staff; No staff in CC quarantine

DMS: 7 (5 from Community) Positive Students; 60 Students in CC quarantine; 1 (from community) Positive staff; No staff in CC quarantine

DHS: There are no students or staff either Positive or in CC quarantine at this time

Updated Flow Chart from SOP concerning identified close contacts from DOE

This is the new update from the DOE on how to consider a close contact. It is within 3-6 feet of someone who tests positive for more than 15 minutes. Pam went over the many different scenarios for what happens in regards to quarantine in the classroom, outside of school and on buses, lunch area or other school areas per the CDC.

Note: When CDC identifies a school as an outbreak, all students in a classroom with a confirmed positive case are considered close contacts. CDC called to inform Pam that DES is in outbreak status.

Focus: How do we keep students in school?

Recommendation from Collaborative Team: Universal masking Pk-12 when Oxford County is in substantial or high transmission rates or PreK-12 universal masking. This is based on how to keep kids in school where we are trained to teach them and where they can learn. We have a situation already at the middle school and at the elementary school where students are missing day after day of education. The elementary school because the teachers are out are offering remote and not all the kids show up. The middle school does not have remote at this time because the teachers are still in school teaching in person. They have offered during the day tutoring and have arranged for some people to be able to do that with their schedules.

Pam implored the board to not discuss masking or not masking/ Covid being real or not but how do we keep our students in school?

There were questions about what outbreak status meant, how long that could last. Pam said there is a certain number of days but didn't have that in front of her. Also around how the school would know if a student was vaccinated and therefore would not need to quarantine. Pam explained that information is in a system that we have within the school. Not sure how many students would still have to quarantine if everyone was masked. Per Mr. Long and Mr. Swan that is difficult to determine. It would depend on the classroom and was not looked at in the original data.

Pool testing was discussed and explained. Two reasons for doing pool testing. One is to catch any positive cases early and reduce the spread in the schools, the other more predominant reason, as the high school principal, is a way to keep kids in school. If students opt into a pool test and it is an optional thing, and their pool is negative then they not need to go into quarantine. It gives parents one more option of how to keep their kids in school. It's possible in the elementary school it could be the class would be a pool and possibly the class broken into a couple of pools. The pool would be about 5-10 students per pool. The pool would be tested weekly, it's a quick swab. Motion: A. Varnum made a motion to follow the Collaborative Team recommendation that when Oxford County is substantial or high there is universal masking. Seconded: N. Sneller. There was more discussion about the numbers in the counties and questions about pool testing. Question about if it is changed to when the county is in red the kids would be masked? Pam explained that the Collaborative teams recommendation was if the county was in substantial/high there would be universal masking. Question was raised that if we mask kids will they stay in school at all times? Will universal masking keep them in school and can kids be more than 3 feet apart? Within 3 feet mask or not they would still have to quarantine? Mr. Swan spoke to it's really by classroom by grade. The younger ones it's a little harder to separate. Possibly put 2 desks together and then the next 2 desks 3 feet apart.

There was a motion on the floor so B. Dyer made a motion to move the question. Seconded: N. Sneller

The voting that night seemed to have this fail, however in retrospect looking at all the votes again it appears that the two that voted to abstain were subtracted from the Yes votes, when in reality that should not have been. It should be noted that the

Yes: 588 No: 141 Abstain: 181 Vacancy (Peru): 91

With subtracting the 2 abstains (which was thought to be correct) it was thought the Yes was 407. Due to what was thought to be a failed vote the motion went back out on the table.

B. Dyer made a motion to continue with the recommendation of strongly recommended by the CDC. Seconded: D. Whittemore

Yes: 370 No: 449 Vacancy (Peru): 91 Failed

L. Whittington made a motion to keep the mask mandate in till there is another meeting. There was discussion on Larry's motion as there is currently no mask mandate and it was similar to Angela's motion with the exception of bringing it to the next meeting.

B. Dyer wanted it clarified that it was different than A. Varnum's motion of masking. Question if it was different due to adding the 2 weeks till the next meeting.

L. Whittington clarified his motion if the CDC says we are a high risk we have everyone in universal masking and revisit every 2 weeks. Seconded: T. Kelly

N. Sneller made a motion to revise that motion because the board doesn't meet every 2 weeks.

The motion was reworded to record that there would be a mask mandate and revisit it at the next meeting.

Yes: 321 No: 589 Vacancy (Peru): 91 Failed

A. Varnum wanted to resubmit her original motion to follow the Collaborative teams recommendation of universal masking when Oxford County is in substantial or high transmission rate. Seconded: N. Sneller

Yes: 769 No: 141 (A. Cushman, B. Dyer) Vacancy (Peru): 91
N. Sneller made a motion to move the question. Seconded: A. Varnum Passed

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent's Report: Pam Doyen

Sports are underway at DHS and TWKDMS. Good to have fans at events. Homecoming for DHS will be next week. There will be a parade on Thursday evening at 7:00. The parade route has changed. We will be coming down Weld Street from the Middle to the High School. There will be a dance on the football field Saturday evening as well. Support for all events would be appreciated.

Administrator's Report: Kenny Robbins

The crew is doing all the cleaning on all the buses and vans like was done last year.

2021 Site Improvement Projects:

DES: Water control upgrade, Roof repair, 2 Rooms upgrading of lights to LED, these are cheaper to change. Fixed some sandboxes

DMS: Tree removal, Roof repair, 90% of floor tile and carpet are completed, Ventilation & heat valves are done- 30-40% outside air-all filtered, 2 years ago a new boiler was put in, it needed a new burner, that has been done.

DHS: Roof repair has been completed- some drains were bad-those were replaced. The old gym floor is out, the new one should be in soon. Gym walls and ceiling have all been painted. On Oct 11 the new bleachers will be installed. The crew removed the old bleachers which saved quite a lot of money. Sewer line outside of DHS was the original. There are been a few problems with it for the last couple of years. That has all been replaced. 4 sections of the old boiler was cracked, all of the new one isn't in yet. Put in a pony boiler- this will save on the big boiler. Had some tree removal done out in back of the high school. Chow house has some renovations done. In the fitness center/shop a wall was put up to separate the areas. A new AC was put in the DHS office. Specialty Services put it in a couple of years ago and it didn't work quite right so they replaced at their cost. Food pantry has been set up out in the shop area.

Transportation:

Summer maintenance on buses and vans was done. There were 6 weeks of summer school using buses and vans. State police bus inspections were completed and all approved. Garage lighting has been upgraded. 2 new school buses are in.

Grounds:

Work started around graduation with the outdoor graduation. One dugout roof came off in a wind storm so that was repaired. New Scoreboard donated by Senior Planning has been

put up. Bob McPhee sign has been moved and the tower painted. Storage shed at the softball field has been painted.

Misc Work:

Lead water testing has to be done at all the schools. B. Ross asked when we would have the results. K. Robbins reported that DES results are back and all set.

Swipe cards for employees for the doors were done.

K. Robbins praised Terri Cox for all her work on getting bus runs pulled together. With all students back there had to be new lists made and that took about 2-3 weeks.

Work Not Completed:

Central Office vault still needs to be all fire proofed.

Building a new booster shack at DMS.

Walkway by SCC needs to have some new pavers, many are broken

Reporting of New Hires:

Nathan Gould- Bus Driver/Custodian (ESSER 1.5 year position)

Stipended and Coaching Position:

Michael Herrera- DHS Math Team Coach

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Student Representative Report- N/A - Connor Weston has resigned from being the student rep position. Pam is in the process of replacing him.
2. Policy Committee- Not met- some policies need reviewing, will need to meet
3. Finance Committee- Not met- Will schedule one soon
4. Curriculum Committee- Jason will coordinate- Will be before the next board meeting 9/28 - 5:30 in the Library. Jason also commented that they will be looking to create a community forum as part of the Ad-Hoc committee
5. Buildings & Grounds Committee- Not met- Received good insight on what they've done during the summer. Our buildings are in the best shape we've been in . Will set up a meeting with the BGT committee to go look at the Bus Garage
6. Negotiations Committee- Nothing
7. Personnel Committee- Nothing to Report

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

B. Dyer was asked a question from a community member regarding sporting events and masking. Has that changed with this decision? P. Doyen responded that universal masking to her means inside because CDC is not recommending any masking outside at this time.

B. Chow commented she was asked how long Bruce was on the board. She couldn't remember but believes Mary has found out that information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn

Motion: B. Dyer

Seconded: N. Sneller

Passed Unanimously

Meeting adjourned @ 8:28 pm